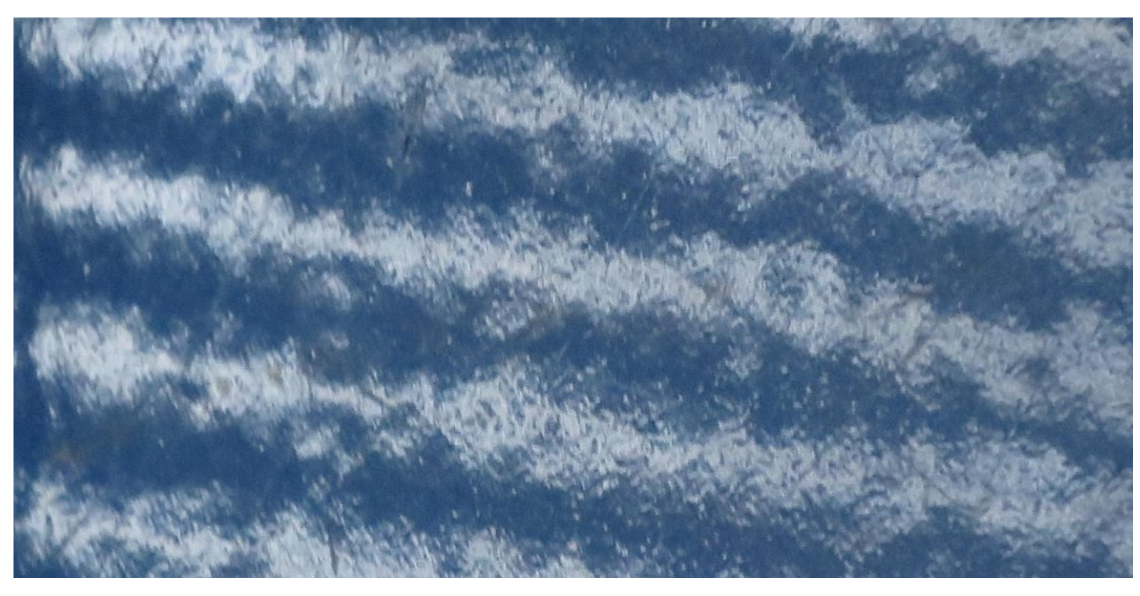
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CHRISTIAN KERSLAKE 2016-09-04

MARXISM AND MONEY IN DELEUZE AND GUATTARI'S CAPITALISM AND SCHIZOPRHENIA : ON THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE THEORIES OF SUZANNE DE BRUNHOFF AND BERNARD SCHMITT

ECONOFICTION, LEXICON, PHILOFICTION   CAPITAL, CAPITALISM, DELEUZE/GUATTARI, FINANCE, MARXISM, MONEY

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We are thus left with at least three ways of understanding the economics of Capitalism and Schizophrenia . One appears most clearly in Anti-Oedipus, and is based on the ideas of Brunhoff. The second only emerges in A Thousand Plateaus , and is founded on the ideas of Schmitt. The third, a combination of theses from both Brunhoff and Schmitt, may be closest to Deleuze's actual intentions in Anti-Oedipus (and the 1971 seminar), but is incoherent. Brunhoff's theory seems to make more sense of the period we are living through, and also helps to bring to light trajectories in Anti-Oedipus that were perhaps not clear when it was written.Anti-Oedipus was composed at the turn of the 70s, at the peak of the long boom, on the eve of the Nixon shock and the OPEC crisis; in other words in a time when 'surplus absorption' might have seemed like the main problem. But as Sweezy himself would later document with Harry Magdoff in Stagnation and the Financial Explosion, the crises and stagnation of the 70s led to a new phase, in which enterprises increasingly sought to realise their now dwindling surpluses by financial means (a process which John Bellamy Foster and Fred Magdoff contend in The Great Financial Crisis´ultimately terminated in the 2008 financial crisis). The financial madness only really began in the period after Anti-Oedipus was written. Sweezy's turn to financial issues in the 80s could beheld to show the transient nature of the 'surplus absorption' problem, which, if it existed, was perhaps no more than an episode, specific to the post-war situation. The overall trajectory, as Brunhoff demonstrates in Marx on Money , is towards the financialization of capitalism, and the instability that goes with it. The 'madness' of capitalism is thus not an effect of the choking of the system with surplus; it is tied up with a specific kind of acceleration: the acceleration of financialization and the precipitation of crisis. It can be inferred that, from their historical position, Deleuze and Guattari were not able to discern the real movement that Brunhoff had already clearly articulated. But they also remained conceptually unclear about where the acceleration was heading. The real movement has only become clear in the wake of the financial crisis. Perhaps it will be possible to move towards a new theory, in which the rise and fall of surplus value can be related to the vicissitudes of financialisation, which could be represented as a third epoch in the formation of surplus value

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